

Q.

942.07 An Essay on the  
Es73 Interests of  
Britain in Re-  
gard to America.





LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF ILLINOIS

942.07  
Es73

~~UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS~~



942.07  
Es 73

AN  
ESSAY  
on the  
Interests of Britain,  
in Regard to  
America.







2 3

AN  
ESSAY  
ON THE  
Interests of Britain,  
IN REGARD TO  
AMERICA.

[Price 6d.]

Photostat Copy made by  
Harvard College Library  
JUN -9 1921

THE LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS



27 A/

3.

AN

E S S A Y

ON THE

Interests of Britain,

IN REGARD TO

A M E R I C A:

OR, AN

O U T L I N E

OF THE

TERMS on which Peace may be restored  
to the Two COUNTRIES.

---

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. SEWELL, in Cornhill.

M,DCC.LXXX.

942.07  
Es73

- Ill. Hist Survey 1892, Harvard 403  
p 45466

23521414

THE LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS



US 2985.26

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY  
EBCLING COLLECTION  
GIFT OF ISRAEL THORNDIKE  
1918

AN  
ESSAY  
ON THE  
Interests of Britain,  
IN REGARD TO  
AMERICA.

WHEN we take a general survey of the political system, we may observe, that tho' the events which give rise to the causes are fortuitous, yet that the great revolutions of human affairs are founded on unerring principles. Tho' liberty, or absolute power, in a nation, is owing, perhaps,

Ms. Hist. Survey 13 Jan 21 Harvard 703







perhaps, to the appearance of a certain man at a particular time; yet a good government never fails to inspire that vigour and activity which make one nation superior to another, that far exceeds her in population and extent.

In the earliest records that deserve the name of history, Asia was the principal actor on the theatre of the world. She was then indeed probably in her ruins: she bore the marks of former grandeur: she was populous and wealthy, and the arts and sciences flourished in her in a degree superior to the rest of the world: but as she was arrived at the last stage of great nations—an extensive despotism—it did not require the spirit of divination to foresee, that she must become a prey to Europe, which began to shew that masculine spirit, which is the characteristic of nations emerging from barbarism. As the conquests of Alexander left her in the same situation, she again fell a victim to the power of Rome. Since the fall of Asia, Europe, excepting the conquests

quests of the Saracens and the ravages of the Tartars, has remained mistress of the world. She has for some ages made the other parts of it only ministers to her greatness. But another power, proceeding from herself, will soon appear, if not to eclipse, at least to share her glory. The degree of its grandeur will depend in a considerable degree on several of the nations of Europe, who are deeply concerned in its consequences. Of these, Britain stands the first, both in respect to her own interest, and to her influence in the new world: our past and future conduct therefore, in respect to America, demands the most mature consideration.

The triumphs of last war are still fresh in our memory: the bold and daring genius of that great man, whom we called upon to preside at our councils, led us to glory and victory: the wounds he had given our enemy, and the spirit he had infused into the nation, continued us in the same track, till







his successors concluded that infamous peace, in which they sacrificed the interest of the nation to the continuance of their own power. But even after so great a sacrifice, they found themselves unable to retain it; and abandoned it to a succession, each, if possible, weaker than the former. Under administrations of arbitrary principles, who, among a free people, could not deny themselves the pleasure of gratifying their private piques, we saw ourselves, during seven years, insulted by the enemy we had humbled, and exhibited a scene of anarchy and confusion which every Briton ought to wish may never be repeated. Happy was it for Britain, that, during this humiliating æra, she was not attacked by a foreign enemy.

They at last yielded the helm to a young minister, who undertook to weather the storm they had raised. Our domestic tumults, under a better government soon subsided; but their bad

conduct had left a latent flame in our forensic dominions, which was not so easily appeased.

Our late expensive wars had embarrassed our finances to so great a degree, as to require taxes burthensome to the people, even in time of peace. Our colonies were already a flourishing people, and increasing in a rapid proportion. The administration had demanded from them a quota for the expences of the empire; but this the colonists refused, unless the restraints were removed from their trade. They resolved to take by force what they could not obtain by persuasion; but the opposition was so violent, that their successors gave it up without a dispute. The conduct of the administrations that succeeded; laws enacted and repealed, and impotent insults offered the colonies, forwarded the troubles that have since distracted the empire. The present minister, though much superior to his predecessors, adopted the plan of bringing America







to an unconditional submission. This effected the present rupture. He has sent numerous and well-appointed armies : armies fully equal to the purpose for which they were intended, and who might have succeeded in all their undertakings. To what then can their want of success be owing? It is because the administration never declared their real intentions in respect to America : the colonists were too wise to throw themselves on their mercy. Their armies were led by men who knew that the conquest of America, by the vast undue influence it would give to the crown, would be as destructive to the liberty of Britain, as to that of America : they saw, that no offers of accommodation were made, that could promise any permanency : they have therefore protracted the war, till that event is rendered impracticable.

Let us not any longer amuse ourselves with the thoughts of the conquest of America. It was only possible while  
 she

she was unacquainted with the art of war, stood single without any support, and was divided within herself. She has now acquired experience ; she is assisted by powerful nations, and the people look no longer towards Britain. The men of sense in America took the lead in the present contest, that their government might be fixed on such a basis, as would ensure her future greatness ; they will never return to their former connection, unless their liberty is secured beyond a recall.

The spirit of all our transactions with America has hitherto been, to preserve our influence over her as long as we could by force, on the supposition, that she must separate from us as soon as she attained to sufficient power. It is an imputation thrown by the enemies of liberty on a free government, that it is incapable of retaining foreign possessions. Of a republic, it may be true ; but, upon examination, it will be found that ours is the only form of govern-  
 ment





ment that is capable of uniting different dominions, to the advantage of all the constituent parts. An arbitrary government has no tie on them, but fear; when that is removed, by an accession of strength, their revolt is inevitable. Our executive power is a sufficient bond of union for the greatest and most distant nations. We have hitherto divided America, to keep her weak; let us now unite her, to make her great. Let us not fear her strength; in augmenting her's, we shall add to our own: we may form out of her great nations, attached to us by the strongest and most durable ties; mutual liberty, affection, and interest.

Though a liberal turn of thinking is a distinguishing characteristic of our countrymen, yet a most sordid attachment to present advantage has been the line of our conduct as a nation. Though we know that magnanimity is a most bewitching attractive, we act as if we thought that nations of freemen can only

ly be influenced by fear. Buried in our immediate, we lose sight of our future and great interests. The very conception that an isle can preserve, for any length of time, an influence by force over a vast continent beyond the Atlantic, is absurd; the taking advantage of her present situation, would only be shewing her an example, which she would not fail to imitate when she became our superior in power. If we secure her to ourselves, it must be by a confederation on equal and generous terms, that will be for the advantage of all, let what branch soever of the confederacy become the most powerful. No offers from Britain have been in any degree adequate to so great an object; but let us propose such as are, and I am persuaded America will break the alliance she has contracted. The colonists know, that their present establishment is unequal to the views that America ought to entertain; that their future fate depends on the issue of the present





present distractions; that they cannot of themselves form a good government, nor effect the necessary changes on the face of the continent; that there is no other nation that can give them a good constitution, nor with which they can be closely or advantageously connected.

It is a happiness which has never yet fallen to the lot of any nation, much less any great empire, after the cool deliberation of years, totally to alter and new model their political constitution: — this, with the consent of America, is now in our power. We have a vast continent before us, to which we may not only give laws, but model its government, and assign the limits of the nations of which it shall be composed. Let us, on so great an occasion, act becoming a people who have been distinguished by the names of men and of freemen.

The original end of government is to promote the happiness of mankind;

this,

this, not constitutions or precedents, is the touchstone by which it ought to be tried. The essential qualities to this purpose are liberty, stability, and vigour. Experience has shewn, that the two extremes, of popular government and absolute power, are almost equally remote from true liberty: to produce true liberty, the different ranks of people must each have a check on the other. The British constitution is the best that has hitherto been devised, and will with the greatest facility be adopted in America; it ought therefore to be made the basis of theirs.

A too small, or a too large dominion, are equally destructive of liberty. In the first, the subject is harraffed by every petty tyrant; the last always ends in absolute power. The fate of ancient nations may have shewn us, and experience has taught the Americans, that small governments cannot have any stability. It is in the power of every demagogue, who can inflame the minds  
of





of the people, to bid defiance to the government. They lie at the mercy of every powerful neighbour; their views, like their power, are contracted, consequently bury the most exalted faculties of the soul.

The principles of commerce have been so long obscured, by the multitude of false shades thrown over it, that it is difficult to revert to those on which it is originally founded; but I believe, when it is analyzed, the advantage it is of to a nation will be found to consist solely in the increase of industry. I will venture to assert, that in the present confederation, no restraint is necessary, but to give the commodities of the different branches of the empire a preference in the others, by a duty on foreign commodities.

We have laid the foundation of a vast empire, let us not alienate it from us, by an attack on that liberty we taught them to revere. Have we forgot that freemen cannot be governed by fear, that they

they must be led by affection? Have we forgot that the colonists are the descendants of those men whose blood procured us the liberty we enjoy? I have seen them in the lowest ebb of their fortune, and their spirit was worthy of their ancestors. If we prosecute the war with them, we effectually promote the ends of our enemies. We shall cement America with them. We find her sufficient to employ all the forces we can spare from a defensive war on our own element; so that they are left at liberty to make use of every opportunity that accident or misconduct may give them. We shall be gradually totally exhausted, and deprived of our foreign dominions; and retain only the mortifying reflexion, that we are but the shadow of our former glory. If we effect an union with America, we shall fix our power upon a foundation that cannot be shaken; she will lay open to us the mines of Potosi, and set free those vast countries where the House of Bourbon

B      exercise





exercise their tyranny, to furnish an endless source of wealth to Britain while she remains a nation.

The true cause of the decline of nations, that frivolous spirit of over-refinement, the source of effeminacy and mediocrity, and enemy to the great, has already infected the court, and even appeared in the camp; but the genius of our people is yet untainted;—if the present ministers are unequal to the task, assume your native spirit, and call forth those men who will lead you to grandeur. Never, since the commencement of the annals of mankind, was so great an object under their consideration. The time is nearly arrived, when a great part of the world must put on a new face; it remains with you to determine, whether the new world shall raise you to a degree of power you have not yet known, or deprive you of the sources of wealth you now possess. Let me conjure you to throw aside that trifling and narrow spirit which must inevitably  
end

end in your ruin: follow the track that the interest and glory of Britain require, and when, in the revolution of human affairs, she shall pass away, empires of freemen shall rise from her ashes, to convey her fame to the latest posterity. ]

The following, which we are well assured would be received by America, is submitted to the consideration of the public, as the basis of an union.

I. That the British empire, as well eastern as western, shall be one people, and mutually entitled to all liberties, immunities, and privileges whatsoever.

II. That the British western empire shall hereafter be divided into four great governments, as follows:

The government of Canada, to be bounded by the present limits of that government, from the bay of Chaleur to near Lake Champlain; there by a line running between





Crown Point and Ticonderoga, and from thence along the middle of the Allegany ridge, till it touches an east and west line run through Sandoski; from thence by that line to Sandoski; from Sandoski by a line to touch the most southern part of Lake Michigan, to run from thence along the middle of that lake to the falls of St. Mary's; from thence by a true north line, 'till it touches the northern ridge, and from thence by it to the sea.

The government of New England, bounded by Canada 'till it touches the present Pennsylvania line; from thence to be bounded by the present limits of Virginia and Maryland, to the sea.

The government of Virginia, bounded by New England, the middle of the Alleganies, and the river Apalachicola.

The government of Virginia Ultra, or  
Florida,

Florida, bounded by Virginia, the Mississippi, Illinois river, Canada, and New England.

III. That the British constitution shall be the basis of that of all these nations, and shall be in every respect conformable to it, except where by the act of confederation declared to differ; to consist, like ours, of the King, Lords, and Commons.

IV. Each state to make such laws as they think proper, for their internal government; provided they are not inconsistent with a free representation, the habeas corpus, trial by jury, and a free toleration of religion; which, being unalterable principles of the constitution, are guarantied by every member of the confederacy.

V. That a war entered into on account of one state, shall be considered





sidered as the cause of the whole, and prosecuted accordingly.

VI. That the contingencies of the different states be fixed by a proper valuation, to increase according to their improvement. The revenue to be paid into the Exchequer of each state, and the executive officers to be answerable for its being applied to the uses for which it was granted.

VII. That as it is the interest of the confederate states to promote the greatness each of the others; the western empire shall allow the importation of the produce and manufactures of Britain, duty free, and lay a duty of 15 *per Cent.* on all foreign goods imported, to be increased as they shall see fit; likewise a duty of 15 *per Cent.* on all dyes, raw materials for manufactures, and a high duty on naval  
stores,

stores, exported other than to Great Britain: and as Britain, from the embarrassment of her finances, cannot allow the importation of all articles duty free, those that are taxed shall be at 15 *per Cent.* less than from any other nation.

VIII. When any accession is made to the confederacy, by conquest or consent, such accession is to be formed into a new state or states, of the extent of from two to three hundred thousand square miles each, having respect to natural boundaries, and to be put under the same government, and received as another member of the confederation.

F I N I S.

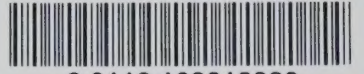








UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 108313930